

Bits and pieces from everywhere make up the

HOME TOWN NEWS



A NICE JUICY STEAK? OR A WOOLLEN SWEATER?

FRANCOIS DESCAMPS must go down in history as the greatest manager in the annals of boxing. If a battle well planned is a battle half won, then Descamps had as much to do with Carpentier's victories as the boxer himself. I will go further and declare that in more than one instance it was Descamps who won the verdict on his wits.

In the heyday of this famous pair, realms of nonsense were written round their names, and it was quite seriously suggested that Descamps possessed the hypnotic eye and that he would hypnotise his boy's opponents into submission. What tripe!

I should not be surprised if the idea germinated in the mind of a woman writer who was seeing a big fight for the first time. She could scarcely be expected to know that it has always been the practice for the manager, or chief second, of the rival parties to cross over into the other man's corner just to make sure that everything was straight and above-board.

HIS EAGLE EYE.

During the long-drawn-out performance of fixing the bandages and tying the gloves, you would always see Descamps in the other man's corner. He would take in everything with his eagle eye, but he was not there for the purpose of hypnotising the poor victim into submission. His chief concern was to see that they were not packing plaster of Paris under the bandages, or putting a horse-shoe into the glove for luck. So much for the hypnotic eye.

Most things can be traced back to their source if only the enquirer be sufficiently diligent in his search. There was a time when Descamps added hypnotism to his self-awarded diplomas when his fertile brain had

to hatch fresh schemes in order to bring him his daily bread.

Finding that his tumbling tricks and hand-balancing work with Carpentier did not bring in the pence fast enough, our old friend launched out as a professor of astrology, with hypnotism and mesmerism thrown in. It must have been dead easy for this spell-binder to gull the awed villagers. Georges was the medium for the hypnotic marvels. He soon revealed a lively imagination by the wonderful things he spoke of whilst "under the influence" of Professor Descamps.

Francois had a powerful brain, but his power of hypnotism was all bunkum, and nobody laughed longer and louder of it all than Descamps.

In the meantime he worked hard in his efforts to make his young pupil into a boxer. At last the great day came for Carpentier, then just thirteen, to engage in his first contest. Only Descamps knew the great task it had been to get his boy started. The engagement was a four-round preliminary bout with a youngster named Bourgeois, a name which sounds like a borrowed one. The payment was so small that it would not have met the railway fare of the boxer alone, and it was unthinkable that Georges could go by himself.

There was nothing else to be done but to tramp all the way from Lens to Paris, and this the pair did with joy in their hearts. It was the first big step on the road to success.

What a world of support it was to this thirteen-year-old boy to have his old friend in his corner to tell him how well he was going to win. He could not very well fail. He won the fight, and they hugged each other with joy.

Long years after, Descamps told me that this was one of the happiest moments of his happy life. There was only one little clot to alloy the delight. This was the fact that he had to act as second in the very unprofessional attire of a torn shirt. He saw that all the other seconds had a real sweater and he had none. You weren't a professional if you didn't have a sweater.

WENT HUNGRY TO BUY SWEATER.

Their first thoughts after winning were all for a good meal in an eating-house, but, strong as was this desire, it was beaten down. They were used to pulling in their belts. The few francs paid for the contest were invested in a sweater. This meant that they would have to tramp all the way back to Lens; but it did not matter—they were happy. They were now full-blown professionals, and neither would swap places with the best workman in the best job in all France.

Georges, as the boxer who had won the money to buy the sweater, was the one entitled to have the honour of wearing it first. He would wear it in his road work, and it would be the turn of Descamps to wear it when he was seconding his boy.

I wonder how many of the spectators who had paid high prices for their ringside seats when Carpentier had become famous observed the very shabby, much-darned sweater that Descamps used to wear. If any of them did notice it, they must have regarded him as the apotheosis of meanness in not buying himself a new one when he must have made a fortune.

BECAME THEIR MASCOT.

They little knew that this was the first sweater the pair ever owned, bought at the price of two empty stomachs. In time the pair came to regard this

AND THESE DIDN'T GET AWAY!

CASTING a pretty line in the Coquet River at Warkworth, recently, Harry Henderson, of Amble, Northumberland, thought he'd got a bite. Ten seconds later, with his rod bent nearly double, Harry knew it was the bite of his life. Forty minutes' battle, and Harry landed a 36lb. salmon, the biggest fish ever to be caught in this river.

That would make a good fishing story—but this one's better. For Harry moved a little upstream and got another fierce bite. Perspiring more than somewhat, he battled for an hour—and landed a 21lb. salmon, the second largest ever to be caught in the river. Beat that one, you fishermen!

LUCKY NUMBER—100,000.

GLAD to be stretching his legs in port again, a Merchant Navy man from Coventry wended his way to a Service hostel in Hull. "Crumbs," said he on arrival, "I've come to the wrong place."

For there, facing him, with a "glad-you're-here" smile, was none other than the Sheriff of Hull, complete in gold chains of office. The lucky M.N. man was the 100,000th visitor to the hostel—and he got the best dinner Hull could provide.

TREASURE CHARTS IN PLYMOUTH.

GOING down George Street, Plymouth, the other day, we came across a man drawing up elaborate treasure charts. He was from the Board of Trade, and the maps showed

valuables still located in blitzed cellars.

His latest entry, when we met him, was £1,500 worth of silver in the vaults underneath a jeweller's, just opposite where we were standing in George Street.

Another marked-out position showed £800 worth of whisky and wine in the buried cellars of a brewery.

There's been one rescue effort for this buried booze.

A young girl worker—yes, girl—was dropped into a cellar which proved to be full of the stuff that adulterates any drink—water.

She'd been dropped into the wrong cellar, and was fished out double-quick. Plenty of the boys have since asked to be dropped into the right cellar—if only for half an hour.

WOP AND ROMMEL LAST IN DONKEY DERBY.

RUNNING true to form at Stockton racecourse, two mokes, "Wop" and "Rommel," trailed down the course in the recent Donkey Derby. They dead-heated for the last place.

Enough money was raised by the Derby to supply a "Stockton Cot" for the proposed Stalingrad Memorial Hospital. The amount left over after this went to local hospitals.

"PHISPHOROUS" H.E.

DOWN in a Devon village the other night, a warden was awakened by thunderous knocking at his door.

Putting on regulation tin-hat, rubber knee-boots, and armed with respirator and whistle, the warden scrambled to it.

At the door was a very agitated woman.

"There's a phosphorous bomb in the next street," she gasped. And, sure enough, there in the still night was a very definite glow. The warden stepped carefully and switched on his torch.

Lying in the roadway was—a very ripe haddock.

"POST HASTE" SHOPPING.

STAFFORDSHIRE housewives to-day are going back to their grandmothers' ways, and do their shopping by horse-carriage.

Because of petrol rationing, two old-fashioned brakes have replaced the bus between Burntwood and Lichfield.

Three times a week the housewives sit facing each other in the brakes and amble quietly out to do their shopping behind two old horses.

SHAVE, BUT NO WASH OR BRUSH-UP.

IF you're in Malvern, Worcs., and want a shave—don't forget to bring your own towel. Barbers here refuse to wield their cut-throats unless you've got your own wiper-upper. It's difficult to get their towels laundered, they say.

OLD SHOTTON SHOWED 'EM.

ALL 93 inhabitants of the village of Old Shotton, Co. Durham, got together in the Wings for Victory Week recently, and decided that they'd raise £1,500 or bust.

In a few days they'd got their £1,500—and by the end of the week they'd knocked up £4,000—and hadn't bust. It comes to about £43 a head.

No. 20 in Golden Age of Boxing

The Crazy Decision That Started CARPENTIER DOWN CHAMPIONS' ALLEY

Told by W. H. MILLIER

sweater as the most priceless of all mascots. The older it became, the more valuable it was in their eyes.

It became part of the ritual for Descamps solemnly to don the ancient rag just before he led the procession to the corner of the ring for the big fight.

When they could have bought all the sweaters in the world, and the year's supply of wool, if need be, they would not have parted with this historic rag for all the diamonds in Johannesburg and Hatton Garden put together.

A recital of Carpentier's early contests would not be very absorbing, but there is one point that strikes the mind now, and that is the guts the boy had in fighting twenty rounds with tough youngsters when he was barely fourteen years of age.

It calls for extraordinary stamina to fight twenty hard rounds in a ring; and no immature youngster should ever be

permitted to engage in a contest of such length.

It is only in comparatively recent years that the New York Boxing Commission made it a law that no boxer under the age of 21 could engage in a contest of more than six rounds' duration. In days gone by, many of our most promising young boxers were human wrecks on the scrap-heap before they had reached manhood, and all because some long-nosed, avaricious, so-called manager wanted to get rich as quickly as possible. Manager is certainly not the correct title for such cattle.

MAKING HUMAN WRECKS.

With a hungry youngster there is the urge to earn enough to keep the body healthy and the mind free from anxiety. With promoters paying so much per round (or, should I say, so little), it is only to be expected that a young boxer would prefer to sign for fifteen rounds, when six should be his limit until he has matured.

There is another aspect. It is absurd, but the fact remains that even to this day if a boxer has reached any prominence he will not agree to box fewer than, say, ten or fifteen rounds, lest he be regarded as still a preliminary boxer and not a top-liner.

Thus it was that Descamps and Carpentier felt they were getting somewhere when Georges, although only fourteen years old, was engaged in a contest of twenty rounds.

It was too much for him, as we might expect, and he was knocked out in the 18th round. The boxer who was the first to make him take the count was named Salmon, a tough and experienced little fighter, who, although only a fly-weight, was a full-grown man. He was in the racing stables at Maisons-Lafitte, where a number of English lads were engaged, and these were among the first to initiate the French lads into the art of boxing.

Ending "THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER"

By Edgar Allen Poe

The Doom of the Dead

I HAD arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force.

Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:—

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who in sooth was of an obstinate and malicious turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand."

"And now, pulling there-with strudily, he so cracked and ripped and tore all asunder that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarmed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused, for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me) that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came indistinctly to my ears what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described.

It was beyond doubt the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still

increasing storm, the sound in itself had nothing surely which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:—

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the malicious hermit; but in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanour, and of a fiery tongue, which sat in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass."

"And Ethelred uplifted his mace and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement—for there could be no doubt whatever that in this instance I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed as I certainly was upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting by any observation the sensitive nervousness of my companion.

I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question, although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanour. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber.

Thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring audibly. His head had dropped upon his breast, yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and

rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile.

The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea—for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway.

Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:—

"And now, the champion having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syl-

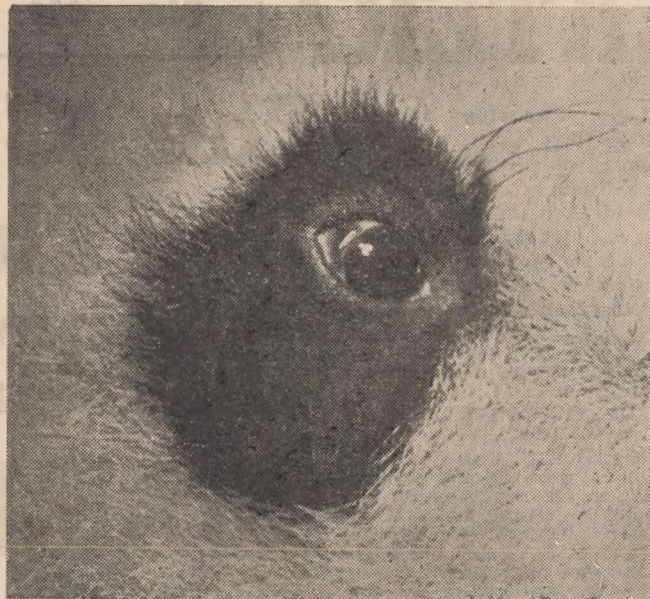
lables passed my lips than—as if a shield of brass had indeed at the moment fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clangorous, yet apparently muffled, reverberation.

Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet, but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity.

But, as I placed a hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips, and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

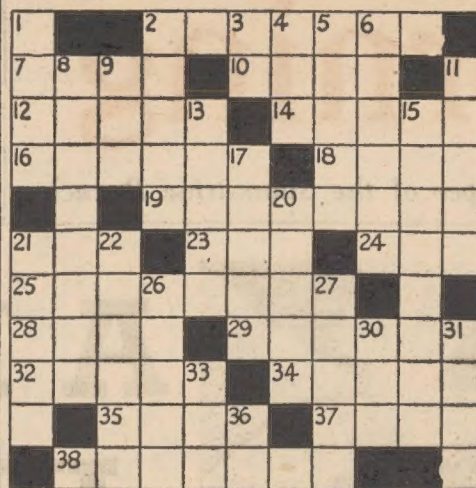
"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and have heard it. Long—

TO-DAY'S PICTURE QUIZ



"Fall out the opticians." Here's a job for the eye experts (and we don't mean "glad-eye"). This is the eye of—a Polar Bear, Newfoundland, Panda, Otter, Sheep? Obviously only one of them. Can you say which? Answer to Picture Quiz in No. 148: Sponges drying.

CROSSWORD CORNER



CLUES ACROSS.

- 2 Familiar fruit.
- 7 Countenance.
- 10 Wind instrument.
- 12 Water lizards.
- 14 Freight vessel.
- 16 Salutes.
- 18 Sensitive.
- 19 Drumming sound.
- 21 Youngster.
- 23 Find fault.
- 24 Discern by scrutiny.
- 25 Putting right.
- 28 Outdoor game.
- 29 Muffle.
- 32 Item of cricket gear.
- 34 Seem pleased.
- 35 Smear.
- 37 Nuisance.
- 38 Fish baits.

CLUES DOWN.

- 1 Tooth.
- 2 Equatic animal.
- 3 Ozy of surprise.
- 4 Cribbage knave.
- 5 Clutch.
- 6 Becomes member.
- 8 Sort of pear.
- 9 Farm beast.
- 11 Very small.
- 13 Get up.
- 15 Small anchors.
- 17 Sedate.
- 20 Girl's name.
- 21 Become void.
- 22 Fool.
- 26 Wanderer.
- 27 Colloquial weather shields.
- 30 Embossing stamp.
- 31 Without discount.
- 33 Dog.
- 36 Remain.

CUTRASS PAH
ONCE KIMONO
TRYSTED LOG
E TOWERING
SALON SET E
ALAR MIST
M YET FOCUS
PRESUMED P
LOT BENEFIT
ESTEEM LINO
RYE ROOSTER

long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I dared not speak! WE HAVE PUT HER LIVING IN THE TOMB!

"Said I not that my senses were acute? I now tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—I dared not speak!"

"And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangour of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault."

"O whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"

Here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul!—"Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell—the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed, threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws.

It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there did stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher.

There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame.

For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low, moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber and from that mansion I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway.

Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued, for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building in a zigzag direction to the base.

While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened; there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind; the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight; my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder; there was a long, tumultuous, shouting sound, like the voice of a thousand waters, and the deep and dark tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the "HOUSE OF USHER."

QUIZ for today

1. What is a Triton?
2. Who wrote (a) The Talisman, (b) Tamburlaine?
3. Which of the following is an "intruder," and why?—Chair, Table, Couch, Sofa, Chesterfield, Stool.
4. What is a flitch?
5. Who said, "Lost! lost! lost!"?
6. What is the difference between a paragon and a pargeron?
7. Which of the following are mis-spelt?—Recollect, Reconnaissance, Reconnaissance, Reconsecrate.
8. Who invented the reflecting telescope?
9. Who was Thomas Gradgrind?
10. Complete the following: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard."
11. The Battle of Agincourt was fought in 1213, 1314, 1415, 1516, 1617?
12. What is a Granny Smith?

Answers to Quiz in No. 148

1. A kind of duck.
2. (a) Dumas, (b) Dana.
3. Sponge comes from a living creature; the others don't.
4. A goose.
5. Queen Victoria.
6. (a) A castrated cock, also a fish, (b) winning all the tricks at piquet.
7. Concomitant, Condolent.
8. The French physicist, Charles, in 1783.

HAVE YOU ANY?

Jokes, Drawings or Stories from your ship's magazine. Send them to the Editor at the address on top of back page.

MISSING NUMBERS

FROM each of the three numbers below the same figure has been dropped:—

19
53
16

In one case the dropped figure should come after the other two, in another case before, and in the other case between the two figures. If you choose the right figure, and put it in the correct position each time, the second number should be three times the first, and the last number a total of the other two.

(Solution in No. 150)

Solution to Numerical Puzzle in No. 148.

15 x 1 1/4 milk portions = 20.
16 x 1 1/4 " " = 20.

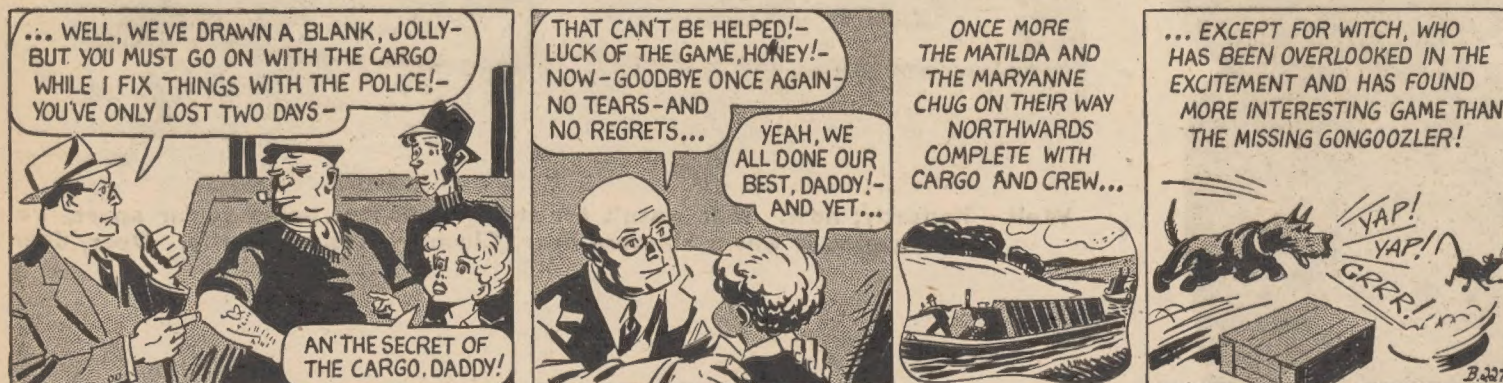
JANE



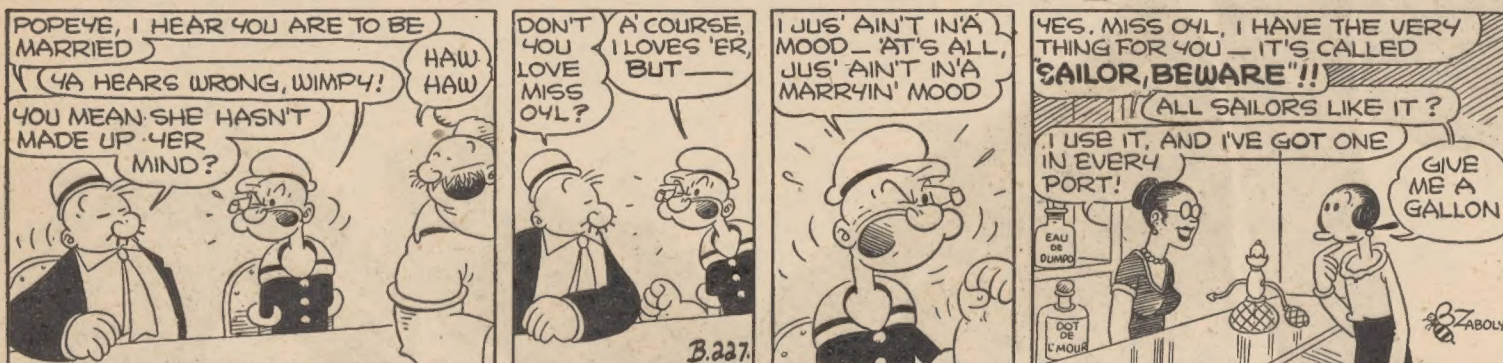
BEELZEBUB JONES



BELINDA



POPEYE



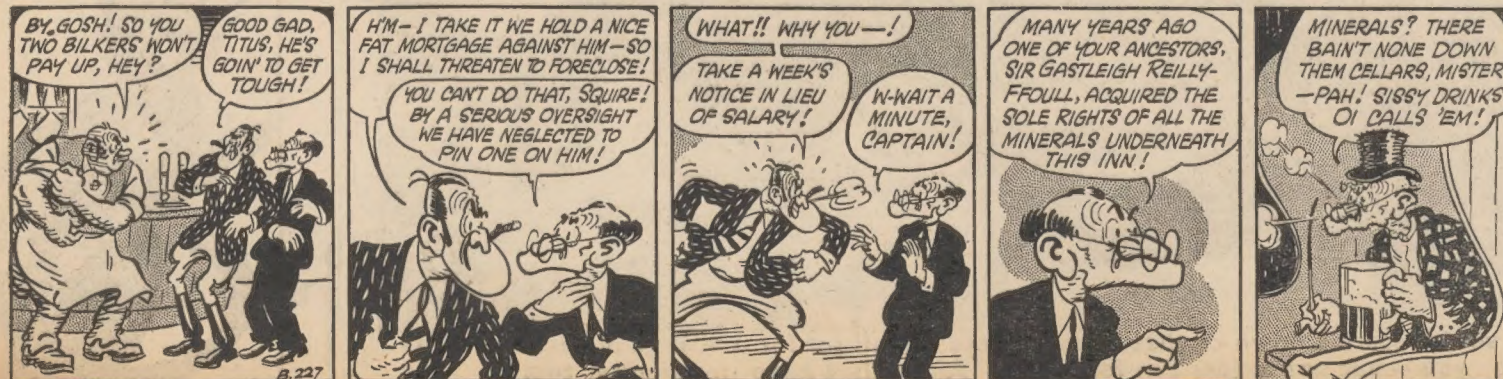
RUGGLES



GARTH



JUST JAKE



World's Oldest Sweetie

By PETER DAVIS

NO Merry Widow can compare with the Countess of Desmond, who enjoyed high jinks at the age of 139 and died at 140.

She was probably the oldest widow who ever lived—and she was lively to the last. Married in the reign of Edward IV (1461-1483), she was still going strong in the reign of James I (1603-1625).

People were considered old at fifty in those days, and when the 16th Earl of Desmond rebelled against the Court and was in consequence deprived of his inheritance, his wife, the Countess Catherine, was allowed to draw an income from the estates (in Ireland) "for as long as might be left to her."

Forty years later, when her grandsons inherited the property, they found they still had to pay out money in her favour.

Thirty years after that, when a great-grandson inherited the estates, he was so annoyed at finding that a considerable part of his income had still to be paid to a figure of the dim, distant past, that he hatched a plot to kill the old lady.

Two men were hired to steal into her room at night, pull the pillows over her head and suffocate her. But the Dowager Countess was more than a match for them. She leapt from her bed, smashed a heavy oak chair across the head of one of her assailants, knocked down the other with a single blow, and then rushed into the corridor and screamed for help.

Nobody heard her, for the Earl had made sure that the would-be murderers should suffer no interference. Undaunted, the Countess rushed back into her bedroom, grappled with the two men once more, snatched a brand from the hearth, and set fire to the castle, as the best way of giving the alarm.

This doughty old girl grew three or four sets of teeth, new ones coming as fast as the old fell out!

She was past a hundred when she made it known that she would be willing to take a fresh husband.

Thinking that Catherine, Countess of Desmond, was a youngish woman, a young blood of London, Fynes de Morrison, set out for Ireland, carrying an acceptable bouquet. On being confronted with an old harridan long past her first century, he asked to see her great-granddaughter, imagining that a far younger woman must be the prospective bride.

On hearing the truth, he turned tail and fled. But the old Countess had fallen in love with him. She angrily set out in pursuit, vowing he should marry her.

Before the Countess reached Dublin, Fynes had already taken ship across the Irish Sea.

The Countess followed in another vessel, but they had hardly been at sea an hour before a great wind swept them back to the shore, and the ship was wrecked. The wetting, however, cooled her ardour and she went home.

By now the Countess was in her 139th year, and still as hale as ever. But the Desmond family refused to pay for her keep any longer.

Counting her pennies, she came to England. Landing at Bristol, she set out to walk to London to see the King and claim some relief at Court.

She begged her food from day to day, and often spent the night in the open. But she arrived in London safe and sound; and the King was so amazed at her appearance that he made her take the return journey with an escort of soldiers accompanying her.

One day—when she was 140—she clambered up a walnut tree to gather nuts, fell from the topmost branches and hurt her thigh. "And that," in the words of the historian, "brought on her final fever."

Send your Stories,
Jokes and ideas
to the Editor

Good Morning

All communications to be addressed to: "Good Morning," C/o Press Division, Admiralty, London, S.W.1.

COLD FEET



Go on. Take the plunge. We'll be mad if you don't. Though we must say you look pretty dinkum that way.

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE !



Well — honestly, now. If it wasn't for those back legs being so far apart, we'd imagine it was a Siamese deer. Close friends, obviously. Deer, deer !



This England

"Main Street," Broadhembury, Devon. Whitewashed, buttressed walls, thatched roofs, and all the ingredients which go to make a real Devon village. Wonder where we can get any cider ?



Nothing like a spot of bribery. Now you've settled down to that bone, I guess I'm all set for a voyage of discovery. IF I happen to get into a jam, I'll yell for you — but not unless I'm forced to. After all, I have my dignity, too.

SHIP'S CAT SIGNS OFF

"Passin' the buck, huh"

